

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~moving~~ picture coding method which performs coding by dividing a ~~moving~~ picture into ~~one~~ a base layer and at least one enhancement layer, comprising:

~~an extracting step of extracting the a~~ degree of importance of each area of the ~~moving~~ picture; and

~~an assigning step of assigning coded data of each area to the~~ enhancement layers in descending order of the degree of importance of ~~the areas~~ each area.

2. (Currently Amended) The ~~moving~~ picture coding method according to claim 1, further comprising regarding an important areas as ~~wherein~~ ~~the~~ an area having ~~the~~ a highest degree of importance, ~~is regarded as an important area and the degree of importance is being~~ decreased from said important area toward ~~the~~ a neighboring area.

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~moving~~ picture coding method according to claim 1, further comprising extracting ~~wherein~~ the degree of importance is ~~extracted~~ by detecting one of a face area ~~or~~ and a moving object in the ~~moving~~ picture.

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~moving~~ picture coding method according to claim 2, further comprising increasing ~~wherein~~ the degree of importance is ~~further increased~~ for

the an area inside the important area where there is a large residual value between the a base layer decoded ~~moving~~ picture and the original ~~moving~~ picture.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~moving~~ picture coding method according to claim 1, wherein ~~in said~~ assigning coded data comprises setting step, a shift value ~~is set~~ according to the degree of importance, a bit shift ~~is being~~ performed on the coded data of each area by ~~the a~~ corresponding shift value, and the coded data of each area ~~is being~~ assigned to the at least one enhancement layer.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~moving~~ picture coding method according to claim 5, further comprising setting wherein a ~~greater~~ larger shift value ~~is set~~ as the degree of importance increases.

7. (Currently Amended) A ~~moving~~ picture transmission method which carries out a coding and transfer of a ~~moving~~ picture using the ~~moving~~ picture coding method according to claim 1 synchronized with each other.

8. (Currently Amended) A ~~moving~~ picture coding apparatus, comprising:

- a picture input section that inputs an original ~~moving~~ picture;
- a base layer coding section that extracts one base layer from said original ~~moving~~ picture and codes the base layer;
- a base layer decoding section that decodes the base layer coded by said base layer coding section and reconstructs the base layer;

a residual picture generation section that generates a residual picture between the reconstructed picture reconstructed by said base layer decoding section and said original ~~moving~~ picture;

an important area detection section that detects an important area from said original ~~moving~~ picture;

a gradual shift map generation section that sets bit shift values as a gradually larger value according to the degree of importance of the important area extracted by said important area detection section;

a DCT section that DCT-transforms the residual picture generated by said residual picture generation section;

a bit shift section that bit-shifts the a DCT coefficient obtained by said DCT section by the bit shift value obtained by said gradual shift map generation section;

a bit plane VLC section that performs a VLC processing for each bit plane bit-shifted by said bit shift section; and

an enhancement layer division section that divides the ~~moving~~ picture stream VLC-processed by said bit plane VLC section as an enhancement layer into at least one portion.

9. (Currently Amended) A program for causing a computer to execute the ~~moving~~ picture coding method according to claim 1.